

Project Narrative – Proposed Walgreens

430 Hungerford Drive, Rockville Maryland

Walgreens Drugstore (the “Applicant”) proposes a new store to occupy the existing building located at 430 Hungerford Drive, Rockville Maryland (the “Property”). The Property has most recently been devoted to restaurant, bar and pool hall use, although it has been vacant for several years. In accordance with Zoning Ordinance Section 25.07.01 Site Plan approval is required as a result of the proposed change in use. Given that the Site Plan application involves an existing improvement and no exterior renovations or revisions to the existing building are planned, there are certain zoning development standards that will not be applicable or may not be able to be satisfied by virtue of the existing improvement which is not changing.

Existing Conditions

The Property is located within the Rockville Town Center Master Plan area and is zoned Mixed Use Corridor District (“MXCD”). The Property is located on the west side of Hungerford Drive and is bordered on the north by a grocery store, on the east by a surface parking lot and on the south by an office building. The Property consists of 52,368 square feet of land area and currently exists as a two story building containing 30,000 square feet. There are currently 84 parking spaces on the Property, with negligible green area and landscaping. Access to the Property is provided off of Hungerford Drive via a driveway and from the adjacent properties pursuant to access easements. The 2001 Approved and Adopted Rockville Town Center Master Plan proposes the extension of Dawson Avenue along the northern boundary of the Property and the extension of Maryland Avenue along the western boundary of the Property.

Proposed Use and Improvements to the Property

The Applicant plans to convert the existing two story building into a one story drugstore containing 13,878 square feet. Two entrances to the store will be located in the northeast corner of the building along the eastern and northern facades. A total of 84 parking spaces and 8 bicycle spaces are proposed. Access to the Property is proposed off of Hungerford Drive in the northeast corner of the Property. In addition, an interparcel connection will be provided to the site to the north and to the west.

The Property is designed to accommodate the future Dawson Avenue and Maryland Avenue rights-of-way. At such time, revisions to the parking and access will be made based on the ultimate alignment of these roads. As indicated on the Site Plan, depending on the final location of Dawson Avenue, a total of 38 to 43 parking spaces will be provided on the Property. Additional future revisions to the Property if and when the roads are constructed will include the addition of a drive through pharmacy window and relocation of the loading and dumpster area.

As noted, the Site Plan application does not involve any expansions or additions to the building. Accordingly, pursuant to Zoning Ordinance Section 25.17.01 no public use space or open area is required on the Property.

In terms of architecture, the building interior will be completely renovated and the exterior will have cosmetic renovations done that will give the building an updated look that we expect will complement other projects in the Rockville Town Center area.

Master Plan Compliance

The Master Plan's Land Use map indicates two separate proposed land uses for the Property – mixed use, with an office preference and retail or entertainment at the ground floor. The proposed retail use of the existing building is thus supported by the Master Plan. The Master Plan recognizes the need for retail uses including retail uses considered as "shopping for entertainment." At the same time, a critical component of any mixed use residential neighborhood is the availability of essential goods that are needed on a daily basis. The proposed drugstore provides such goods.

Mixed Use Development Standards

The Site Plan complies with the following mixed use zone provisions:

Section 25.13.03h. – drug stores are a permitted use in the MXCD Zone.

Section 25.13.05b – The height of the building does not exceed 75 feet and the minimum width at the front line is greater than 10 feet; the side setback is 81 feet to the north and to the south the existing building is located on the property line; the rear setback is a minimum of 40.2 feet

Section 25.12.05b.2(b) – The height of the building at the street is 37 feet.

Section 25.12.06b – Aesthetic and Visual Characteristics

- The architectural design of the building provides visual interest at the street level which enhances the pedestrian experience
- The following items are not located along a public street: window and wall air conditioners, electric utility meters, air conditioning compressors and irrigation and pool pumps
- The entry ways will be well marked with signage
- The mechanical equipment will be screened
- The trash and recycling will be located in the southwest corner of the Property and will be enclosed and covered
- A pedestrian path will lead from the sidewalk on Hungerford Drive east to the building

Section 25.13.07b – The ground floor of the building is devoted to retail use. The facades comply with the height requirements of 25.13.05b.2(b).

Landscaping Screening and Lighting

No changes to either the existing landscaping or lighting are proposed.

Adequate Public Facilities

The Property will be served by adequate public facilities as follows:

Water and sewer: The Applicant has filed a water and sewer authorization. The existing connections will remain and are sufficient.

Roads: The Traffic Impact Study concluded that the surrounding road network is sufficient to accommodate the proposed drugstore use

Utilities: The existing utilities will remain as is.

Schools: The proposed retail use will have no impact on schools.

Parking

In accordance with the Zoning Ordinance Section 16, 69 parking spaces are required and there are currently 84 parking spaces on the Property that will remain. If and when Dawson Avenue and Maryland Avenue are constructed, between 41 and 46 parking spaces will be eliminated, depending on the ultimate alignment of these two roads. In order to accommodate this reduction in parking, a drive through pharmacy window will be proposed at that time.

Signage

Signage for the proposed drug store will be provided in accordance with Zoning Ordinance Section 18. More specifically, as indicated on the elevations building signage will consist of wall signage on the eastern and northern facades of the building.

Public Use Space

As noted, pursuant to Zoning Ordinance Section 25.17.01, the Property is exempt from providing public use space given that no expansion of the existing building is proposed.

Forest Conservation

The Site Plan is exempt from Forest Conservation.

Green Building Regulations

The Site Plan proposal is subject to the City's Green Building Regulations which require a minimum of 10 LEED points for proposed renovations such as the subject application. As indicated on

the LEED score card included as part of the application package, the Site Plan will provide 12 LEED points.

Conclusion

The proposed drugstore provides the opportunity to convert a building which has been vacant for several years into an active use that will serve the needs of the nearby community. The proposed high end design of the store will start to transform this older area of the Town Center and establish the vision for future development.

As explained herein, the Site Plan meets the Site Plan criteria of Section 25.07.01 in that it:

1. Does not adversely affect health or safety of persons residing or working in neighborhood
2. Will not be detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to property or improvements
3. Will not over burden existing and programmed public facilities - project has little or no burden on public facilities;
4. Will not adversely affect the natural resources or environment;
5. Will not be in conflict with the Plan;
6. Will not constitute a violation of any provision of this chapter or of other applicable law; and
7. Be incompatible with the surrounding uses or properties.

For the reasons identified herein, we urge the Planning Commission's support of the Site Plan.